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DECEMBER MEETING, 1877.

A stated meeting was held this day, Thursday, December 13th, at 11 o'clock A.M. ; the President in the chair.

The Recording Secretary read the records of the preceding meeting, which were approved.

The Librarian read his list of donors to the Library for the past month.

The Corresponding Secretary read letters of acceptance from J. Elliot Cabot, Esq., of Brookline, and George Dexter, Esq., of Cambridge, who had been elected Resident Members at the November meeting.

He also read the following letter from the Rev. William H. Beecher, of Chicago :—

CHICAGO, Dec. 5, 1877.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY :

SIR,— Some years since my wife sent you several letters written by Phillis Wheatley, at your request. My wife is now dead, and I shall soon follow, being near my seventy-sixth birthday (January 15, 1878). My children have no interest in these letters ; and, thinking your Society would like the originals, rather than copies, I enclose them to you for the Society.* . . .

Respectfully,

WILLIAM H. BEECHER.

The thanks of the Society were ordered for this acceptable gift.

Captain Gustavus Vasa Fox, of Boston, was elected a Resident Member.

Mr. DEANE read the following letter from a former Corresponding Member, Theodore Dwight, Esq., of New York, written more than thirty years ago, relating to the well-known Journal of "our townswoman," Madam Knight :—

NEW YORK, Dec. 26, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,— The work to which you refer is well known to me. It is genuine and authentic. I had heard of the manuscript for

* Letters of Phillis Wheatley, to the number of seven, were printed by the Society in the Proceedings for November, 1863. Those now presented by Mr. Beecher were four of the originals previously lent by Mrs. Beecher for that purpose. The wax on the letters bears the impression of an engraved seal, with the initials "P. W." A heliotype *fac-simile* of one of the letters, that of March 21, 1774, in which Phillis touchingly describes the death of her mistress, Mrs. Susanna Wheatley, who had died on the 3d of that month, is given at this place.— Eds.

Dear Abner,

I rec^d. your obliging letter, enclosed in your rev^d. Pastor's & handed me by his Son. I have lately met with a great trial in the death of my mistress, let us imagine the loss of a Parent, Sister or Brother the tenderness of all these were united in her. — I was a poor little outcast & a stranger when she took me in, not only into her house but I presently became, a sharer in her most tender affections, I was treated by her more like her child than her servant, no opportunity was left unimproved, of giving me the best of advice, but in terms how tender? how engaging! this I hope ever to keep in remembrance. Her example & life was a greater monitor than all her precepts and Instructions: thus we may observe of how much greater force example is than Instruction. To alleviate our sorrows we had the satisfaction to see her depart in inexpressible raptures, earnest longings & impatient thirstings for the upper Courts of the Lord. Do, my dear friend, remember me & this family in your Closet that this afflicting dispensation may be sanctified to us. I am very sorry to hear that you are indisposed but hope this will find you in better health. I have been unwell the greater part of the winter, but am much better as the Spring approaches. Pray excuse my not writing to you so long before, for I have been so busy lately, that I could not find leisure. I shall send the 5 Books you wrote for, the first convenient opportunity. if you want more, they shall be ready for you I am very affectionately your Friend

Boston March 21. 1776.

Phillis Wheatley

several years, from a lady acquainted with the family in which it had been preserved; and succeeded in procuring it for publication. I copied it with my own hand, retaining the orthography, and omitting only a few words and phrases, which were not very appropriate to a book.

A Boston paper, on the appearance of the work, pronounced it a spurious production, partly on the ground that it spoke of "stages" about half a century before the first stage was known in the country; while in fact that word was used only in its proper English sense, and had no allusion to carriages, to express a species of which it is so extensively *misapplied* in this country.

A large part of the Journal was copied into "Blackwood's Magazine," and most of the introduction was adopted by the editors as their own, without acknowledgment.

The Journal of the Rev. Mr. Buckingham is equally authentic; but not more than one tenth or one twentieth part of it was published, as the remainder is in stenography, and has not been deciphered.

The time is now approaching, perhaps, when such works may receive more public favor. The indifference with which that little book was regarded discouraged me from bringing out any more, though I had two or three old manuscripts which I should have liked to bring out at some future time. It gratifies me to find that you and your friends in Boston feel any interest in the Journal of your townswoman, Madam Knight, as I think it highly creditable to her character and education, and valuable for the picture it gives of the state of the country and people at that early period.

Unfortunately, I have but two or three leaves of Madam Knight's original manuscript remaining; for, after preserving it some years as a precious piece of antiquity, an Irish servant, one unlucky morning, used the greater part of it to kindle the fire.

Painful it is to add that a large correspondence, handed down from the same period, and embracing a number of letters of the same Madam Knight and her friends, was committed to the flames a few years ago in New London. Traces of them were found (as I was informed three or four years since), in consequence of investigations made in New Haven to test the accuracy of some of the statements in the Journal. Madam Knight mentions the settlement of an estate, to which she attended, in the latter place; and the records bear complete evidence of it to this day. Her signature is there under the date specified.

I have been earnestly solicited of late to prepare and publish another edition, with notes, embracing the above and other particulars, and have taken some steps; but, apprehending a second failure, I have not pursued the plan.

Please to present my kind remembrance to Mr. Isaac P Davis when you meet him, and believe me, dear sir,

Yours respectfully,

THEODORE DWIGHT.

CHARLES DEANE, Esq.

Mr. DEANE said that it would be seen that the letter of Mr. Dwight originated in an inquiry as to the genuineness of *Madam Knight's Journal*, there having existed a serious suspicion since its publication in 1825,* up to that time, that it was a fiction. Mr. Felt, in his "*Historical Account of Massachusetts Currency*," published in 1839, quotes a passage from this *Journal* to show how payments were made in dealings between merchants and their customers at that period, and the currency then in use; but, in the Appendix to his book (p. 250), he is careful to say that, "though the female traveller, *Madam Knight*, is a fictitious author, yet the representation quoted from the book bearing such a name appears to be true." Indeed, it was confidently believed by many that *Madam Knight's Journal* proceeded from the fertile fancy of the late Samuel L. Knapp, who had the reputation of writing some clever fictions of a like character.

The inquiry of Mr. Dwight was made on the suggestion of our associate, the late Isaac P. Davis, who seems to have been aware that he had been connected with the original publication of the *Journal* in 1825. Mr. Dwight's prompt reply put to rest all doubts as to the genuineness of this quaint production, and some extracts from his letter were published in the "*Boston Evening Transcript*," of January 6, 1847,—that is, a few days after it was received.

Madam Knight's Journal was reprinted entire in the "*Living Age*," for June, 1858, with an introduction by the late Mr. William Reed Deane, containing much information relative to the author and her family; and a sumptuous edition of it was printed in Albany, at the press of Mr. Munsell, in 1865,†—the editor drawing largely upon the historical and biographical material published in the "*Living Age*."

Mr. DEANE also communicated, as a gift from Mrs. Jared Sparks, of Cambridge, some extracts from the *Journal* of Charles J. Stratford,‡ of Boston, copied by her from the orig-

* The general title-page to the volume containing *Madam Knight's Journal* covered two distinct works,—"*The Journals of Madam Knight and Rev. Mr. Buckingham. From the original manuscripts, written in 1704 and 1710. New York: Wilder & Campbell, 1825.*" (pp. 129.) The special title to the former is as follows: "*The Private Journal kept by Madam Knight, on a journey from Boston to New York, in the year 1704. From the original manuscript.*" (pp. 70.)

† *The Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York, in the year 1704; kept by Madam Knight.* Albany: Frank H. Little. 1865. pp. 92.

‡ Mr. Charles J. Stratford, the author of the journal from which these extracts are taken, was born in Boston, 13th August, 1795. His father was Samuel Stratford, an Englishman, and his mother was Lucy Wallcut, sister of Mr. Thomas Wallcut, one of the founders of this Society, and its first Recording Secretary. Mr. Stratford is now living in Brooklyn, N. Y.

inal manuscript in the hands of Mr. Barron, of the Crawford House, White Mountains. Some of these extracts are here given:—

“My grandfather owned fourteen slaves,—thirteen men, all mechanics, and one female, Dinah. He was anchor-master to King George III. on the West India station, where he died. In settling the estate, grandmother gave them all their freedom. They all accepted it, except Dinah. She preferred to stay at so good a home the remainder of her life. . . .

“Grandmother Walcott, in addition to a subscription of £200, took seven natives to teach.* . . .

“In or about the year 1761, a slave-ship arrived in Boston harbor, with a cargo of slaves. Aunt Wheatley was in want of a domestic. She went on board to purchase. In looking through the ship’s company of living freight, her attention was drawn to that of a slender, frail, female child, which at once enlisted her sympathies. Owing to the frailty of the child, she procured her for a trifle, as the captain had fears of her dropping off his hands, without emolument, by death.† . . .

* Mrs. Wallcut, after the death of her husband, Benjamin Wallcut (who died, according to the record in the family Bible, in North Carolina, and not on “the West India station,” as stated above), resided for some time at Hanover, N. H., her son Thomas being connected with Dr. Wheelock’s school at that place. The “subscription,” it is thought, must relate to sums collected for this school, or the College. It is believed that the Indian lads were taught during Mrs. Wallcut’s residence at Hanover. She subsequently taught school in Boston. Her name appears in the Boston Directory for 1789: “Walcutt, widow, school mistress, Purchase Street.”—Eds.

† This unpromising specimen afterward became the well-known Phillis Wheatley, of whom some account may be found in the Proceedings of this Society for November, 1863. She was brought to Boston in a slave-ship from the coast of Africa in 1761, being then, according to the conjecture of Mr. John Wheatley who purchased her, “between seven and eight years of age.” She probably belonged to a lot of “small negroes,” offered for sale that year, described in the following advertisement in the Boston “Evening Post” of August 3d, and for a number of weeks following:—

“TO BE SOLD,

A Parcel of Likely Negroes, imported from Africa, cheap for Cash, or short Credit; Enquire of John Avery, at his House next Door to the White-Horse, or at a Store adjoining to said Avery’s Distill-House, at the South End, near the South Market: Also if any Persons have any Negro Men, strong and hearty, tho’ not of the best moral character, which are proper Subjects for Transportation, may have an Exchange for small Negroes.”

The writer of this journal speaks of Mrs. Wheatley, the mistress of Phillis, as his “aunt.” She was probably twice removed from this relationship; but the Rev. Robert Folger Wallcut, of this city, a graduate of Harvard College in 1817 (a nephew of Mr. Thomas Wallcut, one of the founders of this Society), who sustains the same relationship to Mrs. Wheatley, informs us that it was customary in the family to speak of Mrs. Wheatley as “Aunt Wheatley.” He says that her maiden name was probably Susanna Marshall: that she was the aunt of his grandmother, Elizabeth (Marshall) Wallcut, referred to in the journal as having liberated the slaves, and of her two maiden sisters, Mary and Anna, and brothers Christopher and Colonel (Thomas) Marshall, also mentioned there; and yet of two other sisters,—Dorcas Marshall, who married William

"The tan placed in the Old South Church was obtained at my great-uncle Christopher Marshall's (grandmother's brother) tan-yard, in the rear of the church, in Water Street; carting the tan up Spring Lane. I entered my apprenticeship to the tailoring business in 1811, sixteen years of age, at the corner of Spring Lane and Water Street, thirty-five years after, a little above the tan-yard. Being sent to uncle's on an errand when quite young, I have a faint recollection of seeing, in the large back-grounds, deep holes and something red, but could not comprehend what it meant; but see now that it was vat and tan.

"In connection with the above, I recollect while an apprentice of hearing it stated in the shop that, in digging for a sewer at the corner of Water Street, they came down upon the hull of a lighter, with about a foot thick of good hemlock bark in her hole, supposed to have bilged and sunk. I have heard that quite a large creek made up as far as Congress Street, of sufficient depth at high tide to admit of small craft. . . .

"At the time of the meeting of the citizens of Boston in Faneuil Hall, Grandmother Walcott sent mother — then thirteen years old — to the hall, to creep up stairs, and go lightly along the gallery, and overhear their deliberations and resolutions; and mother told this to me on a time. I remember the name of Clark as moderator, and she imitated his peculiar squeaking voice. (1775.) . . .

"A society of ladies styled the 'Daughters of Liberty' made rifle-men's frocks, spatter-dashes for the cavalry, shirts and gaiters for the infantry, free of cost to the government. . . .

"General Washington entered Boston after Lord Howe evacuated it. Grandmother sent her niece, Miss Dorcas Kerr, to the Province House, Washington's head-quarters, with her compliments, desiring to

Kerr, and who were the parents of the Miss Dorcas Kerr spoken of in the journal; and Amy Marshall, who married James Ray, and whose several children were Deborah, Elizabeth, Nancy, and Mary Ray.

It will not be regarded as out of place here to mention a few particulars respecting the author of the Memoir of Phillis Wheatley, referred to in the Proceedings of the Society for November, 1863, and certain persons mentioned in it, — which have been chiefly furnished by the Rev. Mr. Wallcut. The author, Miss Margaretta Matilda Odell, was the daughter of Captain James Odell and Margaret (Marshall) Odell; the latter, a daughter of Christopher Marshall above mentioned. The grand-nieces of Mrs. Wheatley, of whom she says she derived the particulars relating to the subject of her Memoir, were probably her mother and her mother's cousins, including Mrs. Stratford and the Misses Ray; and the grand-daughter who corroborated their statements was probably a daughter of the Rev. John Lothrop, D.D., and Mary (Wheatley) Lothrop. The widow lady, mentioned in the Memoir as having sheltered Phillis and her children, on their return to Boston after the evacuation, was Mrs. Elizabeth (Marshall) Wallcut, mentioned above. She was the grandmother of the Rev. Robert Folger Wallcut above referred to, as well as of Mr. Stratford, the author of the journal from which we have quoted.

It may be added that the following title, namely, a "Memoir of Phillis Wheatley, a native African and a Slave, by B. B. Thatcher, Boston, published by George W. Light, 1834," 36 pp., 16mo, describes a copy of a volume now lying before us. It was written for children, and is substantially an abridgment of Miss Odell's Memoir. — Eds.

know where he intended to worship on that day, Sunday. Placing his strong hand on the crown of her head (she being a child), [he] replied, 'At the Brattle Street Church, my dear.' And this cousin told me thirty years after, that, every time she adverted to the circumstance, she fancied she could feel the firm grasp of his fingers.* . . .

"Owing to the precipitate manner in which Lord Howe left Boston, hundreds of British soldiers dodged into lanes and alleys, hid away in hay-lofts and out-houses, intending to be left behind. In the *mêlée*, they left behind most of their effects. Grandmother's two maiden sisters owned † the Indian Queen Tavern at that time, just above the Province House, Cornhill (now Washington Street), a few doors south of the Old South Church. Lord Howe quartered his staff at this tavern, and stabled his and their horses at the same place, *paying no rent* to my aunts for it. Aunt Mary and Anna Marshall applied to General Washington in person, at the Province House (now Washington's head-quarters), stating that the British had occupied their premises since Lord Howe shut up Boston, *rent free*; and had left all their horses and their equipage behind. 'What can you do for us, General?' 'Tell your brother, Colonel Marshall, to sell off all, and pay over to you forthwith,' was the answer. . . .

"Meeting Uncle Thomas Walcott one day on the Common, and while standing on the elevation of land just beyond the 'great tree,' looking across the back bay towards Cambridge, talking over Revolutionary events, how Washington rode from the Cambridge army to Dorchester Heights several times in one night, and completed those breastworks that remain to this day, — which works I helped repair in 1813, — among other things he related to me was this: looking down on the low lands before us bordering on Charles Street, [he] said that, when Washington's army was at Cambridge, the hospital was on the Boston side, that he was detailed as one of the officials of the hospital, and had superintended the burial of the dead from the hospital in those low grounds on the Common abreast of Charles Street.‡

* Where the writer speaks of "Lord Howe," he means, of course, "General Howe." There is no intrinsic improbability in Washington's having taken the Province House for his quarters, whenever he had occasion to visit Boston after the evacuation, — if he had any need of such quarters in the city. It had been the head-quarters of General Gage, and subsequently of General Howe. But Washington's "Head-quarters" were still in Cambridge, as will be seen by a number of letters which he wrote thence after the evacuation, and until he left for New York on the 4th of April following. It is not at all probable that Washington ever worshipped at the Brattle Street meeting-house at this time. It is believed that this house was not opened for public worship till May following. It had been used by the British as a barracks and for the stabling of horses. Washington entered Boston on Monday, the day after the evacuation, and two Sundays intervened before he left for New York. The Rev. Andrew Eliot preached the Thursday Lecture before General Washington on the 28th of March, in the Old Brick. — Eds.

† More probably, "occupied." — Eds.

‡ The writer can hardly mean that the hospital on the Boston side was used, during the siege, for the sick of Washington's army. Mr. Thomas Wallcut was, during the war, steward and ward-master of the hospital at "Barton's Point." — Eds.

"At another time, while we were walking down Federal Street, Uncle Thomas Walcott stopped directly in front of the old Boston Theatre, corner of Franklin Street, opposite Dr. Channing's church, and says, 'There, Charles, you see the mouth of that common sewer? Well, formerly, when I was a boy, I used to catch smelts [there]. There was the head of the creek that made up from tide waters: its mouth was at Liberty Square.'

"At Milk Street, we walked down to the square; and, arriving at the Liberty pole, he says, 'I want to tell you about this pole: exactly at this spot stood the famous British Stamp-Office, which, with the duty of twopence per pound on tea, was among the obnoxious things of those days. Here,' said he, 'was the head of the wharf, and the front rested on the top log, and stood over the dock supported on two posts. As matters grew warmer, a party of Whigs rowed up in a boat underneath, at night, sawed off the posts, and at ebb-tide pushed it overboard, and attaching a rope lowered it toward the channel, sent it down stream; it went out to sea, and was never heard of after. When the war ended, we raised a liberty pole on the exact spot, and it has been renewed ever since, and I hope it will be to the latest posterity.' . . .

"King's Chapel. At the termination of the war in 1783,* very many pious and patriotic persons, who had left the town in consequence of Lord Howe's taking possession of it, . . . came back; of whom numbers were Congregationalists, and were members of the Old South Church. That having been stripped of its pews by Howe's orders, and converted into a riding-school, the question arose, 'Where shall we worship? The British have destroyed our pews, and mutilated our house!' A shrewd man among them answered: 'The Tories have all gone to England: let's go and take possession of King's Chapel;' which proposition was conceded to, and they worshipped in it till they could refit the Old South.

"A part of the congregation remained in it, in order, as I suppose, to keep out the Episcopalians, whom they hated; and the remainder went over to the Old South. In process of time, they of King's Chapel became, through the teachings of Dr. Freeman, Unitarian.

"For some reason or other, they adopted the prayer-book which they found in the chapel, omitting the prayers for the King and Queen, Royal Family, Prince Regent, Parliament, and the Gunpowder Plot; but, after they embraced Unitarianism, they revised and reprinted a new edition of the prayer-book, striking out the doctrines of the Trinity!"

"1799. Washington's obsequies. His funeral was solemnized in Boston, Mass., with great and imposing ceremonies,—firing minute guns, tolling of bells, oration, procession, and universal grief. My father set me astride his shoulders, I was so young and small, and he so tall (over six feet), and holding on to my feet while the procession passed. How vividly do I remember the arch of about twelve feet span, carried by two horsemen, each base of the arch resting on the pommel of the

* The writer should have said, "At the termination of the *siege*, in 1776."—Eds.

saddle; and inscribed, as I have since learned in history, 'First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.' Next, in my memory, was the hearse and span of black horses, with black plumes waving, and on the coffin two swords crossed, a three-cornered military hat just behind them. Then came the noble war-horse, attended by a stout colored man in livery, attired in military equipage. Then came a small platform carriage, with a Grecian urn, which I have since learned was used to deposit the heart of a renowned warrior in; and the sections of men and horsemen, two deep, reached from gutter to gutter. It was so cold, nearly everybody took cold; and it was then denominated 'the Washington cold.'

Mr. DEANE laid before the Society the following list of authors of the various biographies of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, published by John Sanderson, in Philadelphia, in 1823-27. The list first appeared in the "New York Times," after the appearance of the concluding volume of the series, and was copied into the "Daily Cincinnati Gazette," of the 11th of August, 1827, from which paper this list is taken, —

Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence. — To those possessing this interesting and valuable work, it must be desirable to know who were the authors of the various biographies of which it consists. We have taken pains to ascertain, and are enabled to give them.

[The left-hand column contains the names of the signers; the right, the name of each biographer.]

Signers.	Biographers.	Signers.	Biographers.
John Hancock.	J. Adams.	James Smith.	E. Ingersoll.
Samuel Adams.	H. D. Gilpin.	George Taylor.	H. D. Gilpin.
John Adams.	E. Ingersoll.	James Wilson.	R. Waln, Jr.
Robert T. Paine.	Alden Bradford.	George Ross.	H. D. Gilpin.
Elbridge Gerry.	H. D. Gilpin.	Cæsar Rodney.	H. D. Gilpin.
Josiah Bartlett.	R. Waln, Jr.	George Read.	Read of Del.
William Whipple.	R. Waln, Jr.	Thomas M'Kean.	R. Waln, Jr.
Matthew Thornton.	R. Waln, Jr.	Samuel Chase.	E. Ingersoll.
Stephen Hopkins.	R. Waln, Jr.	William Paca.	E. Ingersoll.
William Ellery.	H. D. Gilpin.	Thomas Stone.	E. Ingersoll.
Roger Sherman.	Edward Everett.	Charles Carroll.	H. B. Latrobe.
Samuel Huntington.	R. Waln, Jr.	George Wythe.	Tho's Jefferson.
William Williams.	R. Waln, Jr.	Richard H. Lee.	R. H. Lee.
Oliver Wolcott.	O. Wolcott.	Thos. Jefferson.	H. D. Gilpin.
William Floyd.	Augustus Floyd.	Benj. Harrison.	H. D. Gilpin.
Philip Livingston.	DeWitt Clinton.	Thos. Nelson, Jr.	H. D. Gilpin.
Francis Lewis.	M. Lewis.	Francis L. Lee.	R. Waln, Jr.
Lewis Morris.	E. Ingersoll.	Carter Braxton.	Judge Brackenborough.
Rich'd Stockton.	H. Stockton.	William Hooper.	J. C. Hooper.
John Witherspoon.	Ashbel Green.	Joseph Hewes.	E. Ingersoll. [ina.
Fra's Hopkinson.	R. Penn Smith.	John Penn.	John Taylor, of Caro-
John Hart.	Rob't Waln, Jr.	Edw'd Rutledge.	Arthur Middleton.
Abraham Clark.	R. Waln, Jr.	Tho's Heyward, Jr.	J. Hamilton.
Robert Morris.	R. Waln, Jr.	Arthur Middleton.	H. M. Rutledge.
Benj. Rush.	J. Saunderson.	Button Guinnett.	Major H. M'Call.
Benj. Franklin.	J. Saunderson.	Lyman Hall.	Major H. M'Call.
John Morton.	R. Waln, Jr.	George Walton.	Major H. M'Call.
George Clymer.	R. Waln, Jr.	Thomas Lynch, Jr.	J. Hamilton, Jr.

The following letter from President Lincoln to Captain G. V. Fox, relating to the attempt to provision Fort Sumter, was exhibited to the meeting, and by the kind permission of Captain Fox a copy has been taken for the Proceedings :—

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 1, 1861.

CAPTAIN G. V. FOX.

MY DEAR SIR,—I sincerely regret that the failure of the late attempt to provision Fort Sumter should be the source of any annoyance to you. The practicability of your plan was not, in fact, brought to a test. By reason of a gale, well known in advance to be possible, and not improbable, the tugs, an essential part of the plan, never reached the ground; while, by an accident for which you were in no wise responsible, and possibly I to some extent was, you were deprived of a war vessel with her men, which you deemed of great importance to the enterprise.

I most cheerfully and truly declare that the failure of the undertaking has not lowered you a particle, while the qualities you developed in the effort have greatly heightened you, in my estimation. For a daring and dangerous enterprise of a similar character you would to-day be the man, of all my acquaintances, whom I would select.

You and I both anticipated that the cause of the country would be advanced by making the attempt to provision Fort Sumter, even if it should fail; and it is no small consolation now to feel that our anticipation is justified by the result.

Very truly your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

(Addressed) Capt. G. V. Fox.

The President then said :—

In looking over the interesting Report of the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, at their semi-annual meeting last April, which I found on my table a few days ago, I was reminded of some old papers which have long slumbered in my possession.

That Report, written by Colonel John D. Washburn, of Worcester, deals at some length with what may be called the primitive poetry of New England. It makes honorable mention of the verses of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, as edited, and printed so beautifully, by the lamented John Harvard Ellis, and of Governor William Bradford's verses, as edited by Mr. Deane; and it says, also, all that well could be said in regard to the lines which Edward Johnson has so lavishly incorporated into his "Wonder-working Providence." It does not fail to notice, moreover, Morell's Latin poem on New England, and Governor Thomas Hinekley's elegy on Josiah Wins-

low, "the first Governor born in New England." But there seem to have been other poets, or would-be poets, in those days, besides the "Tenth Muse," as Anne Bradstreet was called, and Governors Bradford and Hinckley, and Edward Johnson. Among the old family papers now in my possession, there are no less than five elaborate Elegies, three of them on printed broadsides, with portentous black borders, and two of them in manuscript.

The earliest and best of them, though that is not saying a great deal, was by Percival Lowell, on the death of the first Governor Winthrop, in 1649. I have given this in the Appendix to the Governor's "Life and Letters." Then there are two, both printed with heavy mourning borders, on the death of John Winthrop, Jr., the Governor of Connecticut, in April, 1676. One of them is signed "B. Thompson," and the other is indorsed by Stephen Chester, Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1680.

Then comes an elegy, in manuscript, on the death of the same Governor Winthrop, signed "E. C.," but without any indication where it was composed, or for what name these initials stand.

And, finally, there is one on the death of the third Governor Winthrop, — commonly called, to distinguish him from his father, Fitz-John Winthrop, — in 1708, which purports to have been written by "an aged Sylvan," and is signed with the initials "B. T.," which undoubtedly stand for the same B. Thompson who was the author of one of the printed ones.

I do not propose to read a line of either of them, for there certainly is not a line worth reading or worth printing. But I exhibit them as characteristic of those early days, and as showing how the griefs of our fathers strove and struggled to express themselves in metrical and rhythmical form. They are like the old grave-stones in Gray's "Country Churchyard," and manifestly bespeak the "uncouth rhymes" and the "unlettered Muse" of the "rude forefathers" of New England.

I am not sure, indeed, that a more vivid idea could be given of the advance of culture and literature during the two centuries which have passed since these homely lines were penned, than by contrasting such doggerel as this with James Russell Lowell's grand Memorial Ode at Cambridge, and Holmes's charming lines on Halleck, and Longfellow's magnificent sonnet on Felton. Of the authors of these old elegies, one is the founder of that eminent Lowell family which has

been represented with distinction in almost every line of life during the last century, — legal, judicial, literary, clerical, mercantile, — and which has given at least twenty descendants of the same name to Harvard College.

Of Stephen Chester we know nothing, except that he was of an old Wethersfield, Connecticut, stock. Who "E. C." was, as I have said, I am entirely ignorant.

But Benjamin Thompson, the author of one of the printed, and one of the manuscript, elegies, was himself a graduate of Harvard in 1662; was a physician and a schoolmaster; Mr. Savage (in his Genealogical Dictionary) stating that he was master of the Boston Grammar School when Cotton Mather was a pupil. This will account, perhaps, for the fact that some of his verses in compliment to Mather are found printed in the introduction to the "*Magnalia Americana Christi*."

Dr. DEXTER said that, in his last visit to Amsterdam, he was fortunate enough to discover a volume — which seemed to be unknown to the Leyden archives — of forms of *application* for permission to marry. The forms were printed, and then filled out in writing, receiving the *autograph signatures* of the applicants. He thus obtained tracings of a few English autographs before, he thought, unknown. Among these were the autographs of Henricus Ainsworth, and others well known among the Amsterdam Brownists. He found also the signature of William Bradford, of a younger look than any he had seen before; also that of Dorothy May, his first wife. The banns between them had been published twice at Leyden but for some reason the marriage took place at Amsterdam, where this original request for a license is now preserved.

Mr. ELLIS AMES produced Governor Strong's private copy of the first edition of the Constitution of Massachusetts, with the Governor's copy of the statutes of the Commonwealth, from and including Oct. 25, 1780, up to and including March 25, 1783, — all in folio, and tied together, with the autograph of Governor Strong thereon; and, after observing that Governor Strong was one of the "barristers and attorneys of Massachusetts," who were addressers of Governor Hutchinson on his departure for England, proceeded to give a complete list of the addressers, as follows: * —

* This list may be seen in the Appendix to Curwen's "*Journal and Letters*," pp. 428, 429 (ed. 1842). A few additional names are given from authentic sources. — E. A.

Robert Auchmuty, of Boston.
Jonathan Sewall, of Charlestown.
John Worthington, of Springfield.
Samuel Fitch, of Boston.
James Putnam, of Worcester.
William Pynchon, of Salem.
Benjamin Gridley, of Boston.
Samuel Quincy, of Boston.
Abel Willard, of Lancaster.
Andrew Cazneau, of Boston.
John Lowell, of Boston.
Daniel Leonard, of Taunton.
Daniel Oliver, settled in Worcester County.
Samson Salter Blowers, of Boston.
Daniel Bliss, of Concord.

Jonathan Bliss, of Springfield.
Samuel Porter, of Salem.
Joshua Upham, of Brookfield.
Jeremiah D. Rogers, of Littleton.
David Ingersoll, of Great Barrington.
Shearjashub Bourne, of Scituate.
David Gorham, of Boston.
Samuel Sewall, of Boston.
John Sprague.
Rufus Chandler, of Worcester.
Thomas Danforth, of Charlestown.
Thomas Williams.
Caleb Strong, of Northampton.
Samuel Field.
Ebenezer Bradish, of Worcester.

The wealthier towns — particularly such as were situated upon the alluvial soil of the Connecticut River — contained a greater proportion than elsewhere of loyalists, of which Hatfield was an illustration, where a decisive majority of the voters were what, in the language of the times, were called Tories; and their votes and resolves were greatly applauded in England, and will now be found recorded in some of the English histories of the time. Their votes were quite the reverse of the votes of the town of Abington, for instance, whose patriotic resolves also attracted attention in Europe for the ability with which they were drawn.

Samuel Quincy had been solicitor-general of the province, and had a good law library containing the principal common-law treatises and the English law reports up to that time, as may be seen by the inventory of his effects made up by the committee of sequestration, when his estate, real and personal, including his library, was confiscated. Though the address of the barristers and attorneys to Hutchinson was in the spring of 1774, yet Governor Strong was elected representative of Northampton, and took his seat in the 2d General Court of the Revolution, which met on the 31st day of May, 1776; and John Lowell was soon after elected a member of the Continental Congress from Massachusetts, and afterward one of the Massachusetts judges of admiralty, — for I well remember that the late Judge John Davis, District Judge of the United States for the District of Massachusetts, long a member of this Society, told me, in the winter of 1834, that the first court in session that he ever saw was an admiralty court held at Plymouth, about the year 1782, and that Judge Lowell was then and there presiding.

Though the eminent lawyers of that time mostly adhered to the British administration, yet some of the addressers above

named remained all their lives unmolested in the Commonwealth, and were citizens of great uprightness, integrity, and ability, and afterwards held very responsible positions in government and society.

It is very remarkable that some persons in the colonies, at first opposed to English rule, became Tories; and others, at first Tories, changed sides, and became active promoters of independence. Among the latter class was John Worthington, of Springfield, one of the executors of the will of Colonel Ephriam Williams, killed at the battle of Lake George, Sept. 8, 1755, who held the estate of Colonel Williams about thirty-seven years. He then rendered his account to the Legislature of Massachusetts of principal and interest, in a manner that would do the highest credit to a treasurer of any savings bank in these days; and, when the Legislature accepted his account, he paid over the amount, and Williams College at Williamstown was established by that fund, pursuant to the will of Colonel Williams and an act of the General Court.

Of Governor Strong, it will be remembered that he resigned his seat in the Senate of the United States to take the office of Governor of Massachusetts. Joshua Upham, of Brookfield, was the father of the late Hon. Charles Wentworth Upham, of Salem, formerly a member of this Society, and a distinguished historian. Of most of the addressers, the late Hon. Lorenzo Sabine has given a short memoir, in his work upon the Loyalists.

Mr. WATERSTON then said, —

It will be remembered that, eight years ago, the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Alexander von Humboldt was celebrated in this city. Literary and scientific men, by invitation of the Society of Natural History, assembled from various parts of the country, to listen to an address by Professor Agassiz.*

The distinguished speaker on that occasion had upon his desk, or near it, what he considered a precious memento, — a palm-branch which had been borne upon the coffin of Hum-

* A fact, adding practical importance to the Humboldt celebration, was the creation of the "Humboldt Scholarship." Over eight thousand dollars was subscribed on that occasion for the purpose of aiding young and needy students, while pursuing their preparatory studies at the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy in Cambridge. This sum now forms a permanent fund, the income of which is under the direction of the Faculty, and has been productive of great good. Mr. Theodore Lyman, the Treasurer, writes, "The fund is just what we need, and its value must always be of the first order."

boldt, or carried by a student in the solemn procession on the day of the funeral. This palm-branch was brought from Berlin by the President of this Society, the Hon. R. C. Winthrop, and was presented by him to Agassiz.

In conversing with Mr. Alexander Agassiz, a few days since, he stated that at the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, in Cambridge, there was no appropriate place for a relic of this description; and he proposed that it should be placed in the care of this Society, authorizing me to present it in his name.

At the reception of scientific gentlemen on the evening of the celebration, a portrait of Humboldt was presented to the Society of Natural History. This portrait had an added interest from the fact that it was painted by Mr. Wight, an American artist, at Berlin, after Humboldt had passed the age of eighty-three. To accompany the palm-branch, I herewith present a proof impression selected by the artist of an admirable steel engraving, taken from this portrait; also an autograph letter, written by Humboldt in his advanced age; together with a copy of the address by Louis Agassiz, delivered on the centennial anniversary of Humboldt's birth.

That interesting occasion was the last upon which Agassiz addressed any large assembly. Not long after, he was suddenly stricken down by illness, after which time any continued mental effort awakened apprehension of danger. It may not, therefore, be inappropriate to recall the earnestness with which our great Naturalist prepared himself for this discourse.

As chairman of the committee of arrangements, I was led to know of the conscientious manner in which that preparation was made.

When Agassiz's name was proposed, well do I remember the smile of Professor Jeffries Wyman, as he said, "Certainly, he is the man; but it is useless to expect him to do it." "Why?" I asked. "Because he has so much work on hand, that he will not accept; and, if he does accept, his responsibilities are such that I believe he will never give the address."

Yet such were Agassiz's relations to Humboldt, — having united in investigations with him as a youthful student, and being bound to him by ties of gratitude and affection, and knowing, as few men could, the vast work he had accomplished in the world of science, — he felt that the task proposed was one which he could not decline.

It was in the heat of midsummer, yet this did not intimidate him. There was illness in his family, but this did not hold him back. His son, exhausted by labor, was obliged to

leave home just at that time in the steamer for Europe. Yet here he felt was a duty which must be fulfilled.

In order to be free from interruption, he asked at the City Library if a room could be appropriated to himself, where he might call for such volumes as he should need, and keep himself secluded under lock and key. This desire was at once met; and for two weeks Agassiz was there, deeply engaged in his investigations, from nine o'clock in the morning until three o'clock, or later, in the afternoon.

Familiar with all Humboldt had written, a re-examination, he felt, was now called for. Every production which had come from Humboldt's pen must be critically considered. He must satisfy himself with the precise work which had been accomplished, and, taking nothing at second-hand, he must know just where, and to what extent, he had enlarged the boundaries of knowledge.

Mr. Winsor, at that time Superintendent of the City Library, informed me that more than two hundred volumes, in different languages, were examined by Agassiz; and so complete was the collection brought within his reach, that every book Humboldt had written was there, with the exception of one small pamphlet which had been out of print many years.

In a note from Mrs. Agassiz, dated June 8th, she says: "I could almost have wished this occasion had not arisen, for it alarms me to see the way in which work accumulates upon Mr. Agassiz, whose health is no longer as good as it used to be. It seems as if it would be easy for him to talk of Humboldt, and so, out of the fulness of his heart, it would; but on such an occasion the address must include a very careful review of all the facts of his life, of his relation to science through three quarters of a century; it must be accurate as well as comprehensive; and even Humboldt's most intimate friend could not prepare it without a good deal of care and research."

We see with what scrupulous fidelity the preparation was made. In a note which I received from him, September 4th, he says, "I have only yesterday finished gathering my materials, I have not yet begun preparing my address. My friends will never know what anxieties I have to go through on this occasion."

Six days after (September 10th), he writes: "I have succeeded this evening in bringing to a close my draft of an address." And he adds, "Not exactly as I would like to deliver it; but such as I may be compelled to read, should the

occurrences of the day unfit me for an extemporized discourse, which, I believe, might be more effective."

From this statement, we see that, having gone thoroughly over the whole field of investigation, he yet hoped to lay what he had written aside, and from the inspired earnestness of the moment give expression to the glowing convictions which would come to him at the time.

He felt, however, that under existing circumstances there would be some risk in such an attempt; and though those who knew his wonderful command of language, and his mastery in presenting with translucent clearness any topic, however difficult or abstruse, holding an audience, which he often did, as by some mysterious spell, may feel that he might safely have trusted himself without notes, as he so often had done on former occasions. Still, doubtless he chose wisely in relying upon what he had carefully elaborated, where every statement had been scrupulously weighed, and every epithet was not only felicitous, but the word selected from among all others to convey his sincere conviction.

Thus, a few days after, he writes that he shall "have his illegible manuscript" set in type, that he may himself "be able to read it." On the 13th of September, he wrote:—

"I hope I may have a proof of my address by the time I reach Boston to-morrow. My diagrams went to the Music Hall Saturday afternoon, with the palm-branch worn on Humboldt's funeral."

Those of us who heard that able address will, no doubt, recall it as an event most memorable. The discourse was a noble tribute from one great mind to another, where both alike had devoted with untiring energy every faculty, through all the years of life, to the study of nature and the acquirement of truth.

May we not feel that this palm-branch borne at the funeral of Humboldt, and brought from beyond the Atlantic as a memento to Agassiz, by whose side it rested while he delivered his centennial address, shall henceforth be associated both with Agassiz and Humboldt as the symbol of Victory and of Peace.

Mr. Winsor, late librarian of the Boston Public Library, confirmed Mr. Waterston's statements as to Mr. Agassiz's visits to the Library during the preparation of his address on Humboldt.

The President read a letter from Miss Eliza Susan Quincy, dated "Quincy, Dec. 18, 1877," communicating the proceed-

ings of the Washington Benevolent Society, relating to the Gorget of Washington, beautifully engrossed on leaves of parchment attached together in the form of a small book, in order that it should be deposited in the box containing the Gorget itself. The parchment had been temporarily mislaid at the time Miss Quincy, in June last, surrendered the Gorget to the Society agreeably to the bequest of her father, the late Honorable Josiah Quincy, in his last will. The proceedings of the Washington Benevolent Society, transcribed from this parchment, here follow:—

Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts.

At a quarterly meeting of the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts, on Tuesday evening, April 13, 1813, the Hon. Mr. Quincy delivered to the President the Gorget of Washington, being a part of his uniform, when, as a colonel in the service of the State of Virginia, he served under General Braddock, in the war of 1756; having the arms of that State engraven thereon.

Mr. Quincy said that this precious relic was presented to the Washington Benevolent Society, in the town of Boston, by Mrs. Martha Peter (formerly Custis), the lady of Thomas Peter, Esq., of Tudor Place, in the District of Columbia, the grand-daughter of General Washington; that this lady, as distinguished by her personal and mental accomplishments as by her illustrious relation, had been pleased to say "that she had received this Gorget, and the ribband attached to it, at the division of her grandfather's estate, and that she had selected the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts as the depository of this precious memorial, because she knew of no place where the principles of Washington had been more uniformly cherished than in the town of Boston, and thought nowhere was it likely to be prized higher or preserved longer than by this institution."

On motion of William Sullivan, Esq.,

Voted, That this Society receive with grateful sentiments the donation of Mrs. Martha Peter, the grand-daughter of the illustrious Washington,* presented this evening by the Hon. Mr. Quincy; and that the President, with such other persons as he may please to appoint, be a committee to express to that lady, in behalf of the Society, the emotions which her gift has inspired, and the veneration with which this precious relic shall be preserved.

The President then nominated the Hon. Mr. Quincy and the other Vice-Presidents of the Society to be of the aforesaid committee; and the same were approved accordingly.

Attest, WILLIAM COCHRAN, *Secretary*.

* She was the grand-daughter of Mrs. Washington. Her maiden name was "Martha Parke Custis," daughter of John Parke Custis, the only son of Mrs. Washington by her first husband. She was born 31st December, 1777, and was early married to Mr. Thomas Peter. — Eds.

Letter from the Committee of the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts to Mrs. Martha Peter.

Boston, 30 April, 1813.

MADAM, — The subscribers being a committee appointed by the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts, in pursuance of the accompanying proceedings and vote, have the honor to express in behalf of that Society the emotions which the precious relic you have been pleased to bestow has inspired, and the veneration with which it shall be preserved.

Be assured, Madam, that by none more than by the members of the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts could this memorial of your illustrious ancestor have been received with a purer devotion to his memory; nowhere could hearts have been found more disposed to appreciate the value of every thing which tends to revive the recollection of his many virtues and services, and to inspire a veneration for his example and maxims.

Deeply sensible of the honor conferred on this institution by this distinguished mark of your approbation and favor, we are, Madam, very respectfully,

Your obedient servants,

(Signed)

ARNOLD WELLES, *President.*

WILLIAM SULLIVAN,

JOSIAH QUINCY,

DANIEL MESSENGER,

JOHN C. WARREN,

BENJAMIN RUSSELL,

} *Vice-Presidents.*

Mrs. MARTHA PETER.

Copies of record of the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts. At a meeting of the Standing Committee, Jan. 21, 1817,

Voted, That Colonel Henry Sargent be a committee to have prepared a suitable box in which the Gorget shall be put, and the same shall be deposited in one of the banks for safe-keeping.

LEWIS TAPPAN, *Secretary.*

At an annual meeting, Feb. 17, 1818, the following vote was unanimously adopted:—

Voted, That the President be requested to cause a suitable inscription to be put on the box containing the Gorget of General Washington; and the doings of the Society in relation to the reception and preservation of this relic, to be inscribed on parchment, to be kept within the box; the same to be deposited in a vault of one of the banks in this town, and the key to be handed to his successor.

LEWIS TAPPAN, *Secretary.*

This is to certify that, in obedience to vote of the Washington Benevolent Society of Massachusetts, of 17th February, 1818, the foregoing extracts are made from the Society's books and papers, to be deposited with the Gorget, forever to be preserved as an invaluable

relic of that illustrious soldier and statesman who was "first in War, first in Peace, and first in the hearts of his Countrymen."

Dated in Boston this twenty-second day of February, Anno Domini One thousand, eight hundred and eighteen.

JOSIAH QUINCY, *President.*

LEWIS TAPPAN, *Secretary.**

* By reference to the printed Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, at a meeting held at the house of Mr. Quincy, in April, 1858, it will be seen that Mr. Quincy there relates that, after the dissolution of the Washington Benevolent Society, the gorget was formally placed in his custody; that he immediately wrote to Mrs. Peter, offering to return the gorget to her; that "she was pleased to reply that it was her wish that I should retain it in my possession, and make such disposition of it as I saw fit." Mr. Quincy subsequently bequeathed this interesting relic to the Historical Society. See Proceedings for June, 1877, pp. 302, 303. — Eds.